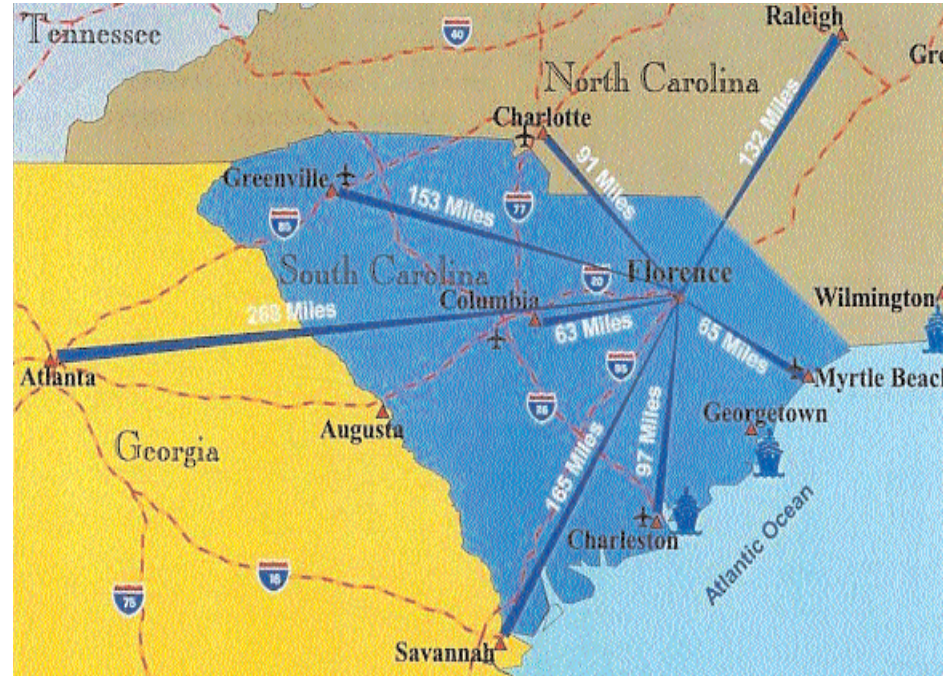


Pee Dee State Farmers Market

Farmers markets are not only an essential source of income for family farmers, but they also provide locally-grown, nutritious fruits and vegetables, fresh plants and flowers as well as other farm products for many people---especially those living in urban areas. They bring more people into downtown areas, have a rejuvenating economic effect upon nearby businesses, and play an important role in urban development.

The Pee Dee State Farmers Market includes a 45,000 square foot drive-through farmer-trucker shed filled to the brim with produce and horticultural products year round. A log-cabin-style gift shop complete with gardens and greenhouses, several acres of statuary products, greenhouse and shade cloth areas featuring tropical plants, flowers and many other items, and a 100-year-old barn which houses several shops and a potter's studio are also a part of the Pee Dee Market. A 25,000 square foot facility is also leased to the Harvest Hope Food Bank. Vending machines and rest rooms are conveniently located on the premises. Admission and parking are free.



The Pee Dee State Farmers Market is situated on 55 acres on US Hwy. 52 at 2513 W. Lucas St., Florence, SC.

- one and half miles from major I-95 exit 164
- three miles from I-20/I-95 spur
- halfway between Florence and Darlington, SC
- more than one-quarter million visitors annually

Pee Dee State Farmers Market

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State Farmers Market





History

Agriculture has always been an integral part of the local economy of the Pee Dee. In the late 1880s, a curb market occupied the ground floor of the Florence City Hall where meat and fresh produce from Florence and adjacent counties were sold to the townspeople. The Irby Street Market was established by the Florence Kiwanis Club, the Florence County Delegation, and the Clemson University County Extension Office in the late 1950s. These curb markets offered fresh garden produce, watermelons, home baked goods, home canned goods, pickles, sugar cane, jellies, corn meal, milk, eggs, and home craft items such as aprons and dolls.

To replace the old curb markets, the Pee Dee State Farmers Market was opened in June of 1983 at the “Old Tobacco Experiment Station” location on Highway 52. The 55 acres of land on which the Pee Dee Market now rests was originally used for production farming.

The *Barn Again!* Market

An old, stately red barn used for mules was part of the original farm on which the South Carolina Department of Agriculture's Pee Dee State Farmers Market in Florence now resides.

In order to preserve the integrity of the 100-year-old structure, the Department has renovated the barn. In fact, it has been *Barn Again!*

The red barn is now used to market and promote South Carolina agricultural products in its shops and houses a potter's studio.

Plant and Flower Festivals

While buying and selling produce has traditionally been the primary focus at the Pee Dee State Farmers Market, more and more people have become interested in ornamental horticulture, so the Market now hosts spring and fall plant and flower festivals that attract visitors from all over the country.

Each spring, the Pee Dee Market hosts the Southern Plant and Flower Festival and each fall the Fall Plant and Flower Festival. The festivals have become annual pilgrimages for visitors from all over the state and nation. Some visitors plan their vacations around the events which feature a vast array of plants, flowers, and other gardening items for planting and lawn beautification.

Location! Location! Location!

The Pee Dee Market has become a prime location for the ornamental horticulture and floriculture industry partially because of its location. The Pee Dee Market is a destination stop on the way to Myrtle Beach and for travelers north and south along the eastern seaboard. But, more than that, homeowners are taking pride in their home's appearance and the demand for plants and flowers as well as lawn and garden products has grown.

Hours of Operation

The State Farmers Markets are operated by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture Marketing Division. Retail vendors are open year-round.

